

Press Release



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Supervisor Janet Wolf and St. Vincent's Announce Groundbreaking Ceremony for New Community Garden

Santa Barbara, CA – Second District Santa Barbara County Supervisor Janet Wolf will join Sr. Judith Schomisch, D.C., Executive Director of St. Vincent's, staff, and residents for a groundbreaking ceremony for the newly established Community Garden on Saturday, November 7, 2009 at 11:00 a.m. Located on St. Vincent's property at 4200 Calle Real, the Community Garden will provide learning opportunities as well as restorative pleasures for the almost 600 campus residents.

With the assistance of volunteers from Citibank's Global Community Day Program and the Santa Barbara community, volunteers and staff from St. Vincent's will build raised planter boxes on the site from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

"I am pleased to have been able to contribute some funds to help St. Vincent's create this community garden," Supervisor Wolf said. "A community garden is a wonderful opportunity for the young and old alike to work together to grow their own food. Such a project promotes the values I care deeply about: creating sustainable living communities here in Santa Barbara County, intergenerational collaboration, and exposing our youth, families and seniors to the culture of gardening, healthy eating, and environmental stewardship."

"I am overwhelmed by the support of the greater Santa Barbara Community and especially that of Supervisor Wolf and Citibank for taking a leadership role in their assistance with the garden. This is a long awaited pleasure," Sister Judith Schomisch, D.C., Executive Director of St. Vincent's added. "We have had the seniors and moms from the Paths Program as well as children from the families asking repeatedly if they could have a garden. Some of them even want to grow vegetables to contribute to Vincent's Heart, a program for the residents on St. Vincent's property that provides food from the Foodbank to those that are in need at a given time. This will be fun endeavor and I will look forward to seeing the planter boxes flourish and grow."

Residents from Villa Caridad, St. Vincent's Gardens, and the PATHS program for single mothers and their children, along with St. Vincent's began their fundraising for the garden by collecting bottles and cans with a goal of raising \$10,000. A generous Santa Barbara County grant and cash and inkind donations from individuals and local businesses have provided the start-up funds to complete phase one of this two phase project. Continuing efforts are underway to complete this garden project where St. Vincent's residents can grow their own vegetables, fruits, and flowers. In promoting the values of intergenerational connections, resource sustainability, and environmental responsibility, the goal is to become a model for creating more gardens within Santa Barbara. Phase two will complete the Garden by the end of 2010.

The partnership between St. Vincent's and Mercy Housing California in building 170-affordable housing units in Santa Barbara has proven to fulfill the basic needs of shelter, as well as educational and recreational opportunities for families and seniors. The Community Garden is just one of many campus-based collaborative efforts and intergenerational activities provided to residents of the Affordable Housing Programs that promises to be a significant resource for fresh, nutritious food, and opportunities for learning about and caring for our environment.

St. Vincent's is dedicated to serving the basic needs of the Santa Barbara Community through finding solutions to housing, education, and childcare. For information on supporting the vital community programs and volunteer opportunities at St. Vincent's log onto www.stvincents-sb.org or contact Jane Covert-Lannon, Admin. Assistant 805-683-6381 ext. 106.

St. Vincent's seeks to break the cycle of poverty, violence and abuse for the most vulnerable and needy of Santa Barbara County. Through educational and personal growth opportunities, we are committed to helping our sisters and brothers who are poor realize their full potential as children of God with dignity and respect.